

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please CANCEL claims 14-22 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the recited subject matter.

Please ADD new claims 23-27, as follows. For the Examiner's convenience, all claims currently pending in this application have been reproduced below:

1-22. (Canceled)

23. (New) An exposure apparatus for exposing a wafer to light via a mask, said apparatus comprising:

a process chamber in which the wafer is exposed to the light;

a load-lock chamber connected to said process chamber via a gate valve;

a transfer mechanism to transfer the wafer from another apparatus different from said exposure apparatus into said load-lock chamber;

a booth which is connected to said load-lock chamber via a gate valve and covers said transfer mechanism; and

a gas flow forming mechanism which includes a filter and causes gas through said filter to flow through said booth.

24. (New) An apparatus according to claim 23, wherein said gas flow forming mechanism comprises a circulation unit to exhaust gas from said booth and to return the exhausted gas to said booth through said filter.

25. (New) An apparatus according to claim 23, wherein said gas flow forming mechanism comprises a fan unit to supply gas to said booth through said filter.

26. (New) An apparatus according to claim 23, wherein said gas flow forming mechanism is arranged to form a laminar flow of the gas in said booth.

27. (New) An apparatus according to claim 23, wherein the other apparatus is a coater/developer.